

Julian M. Leidman  
940 Wayne Ave  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-4428

October 8, 1996

Dear Julian:

You have sent to us and asked for our opinion as to the authenticity of a 1670 French Colonial 15 Sous which belongs to a customer of yours. You presented little supplementary information because you said that data was inadvertently lost recently by a third party. We do not have another piece in our holdings to compare the piece with at this time and have made no metallic analysis.

As you know the identical piece was listed and illustrated as Lot # 1 of Bowers & Merena "Rarities Sale" auction held August 12, 1996 and was returned due to the price not reaching the reserve. It is there stated that ANA Authentication Bureau Certificate AB 4755 was issued but we have not seen it. We understand there is some difference of opinion as to the genuineness of the piece.

Other examples are Garrett III, # 1297, Stack's 11/12/74 # 382, Federal ANA Auction August 19, 1964 # 1500 and New Netherlands April 22, 1960, and Hess (Ulex) 1908, of which some may be duplications. Historical studies also have pictures but the submitted specimen has not had a provenance we can locate.

The obverse of the submitted piece is clearly distinguishable by a scratch from the chin diagonally down to the left and damaging the dentil just left of 6 o'clock. The obverse has a rough field area above the head to the right of the small sunburst which is partly obscured. This roughness could be from a casting defect which has been tampered with. The obverse has a scratch beginning at the area below V of NAV and R of REX into the bust. There is a small lump below the fourth I in XIIII. This raised lump is caused by a depression in the die and can be seen on other examples. There is another tiny lump under the V of TVI on the reverse. There are other minor obverse scratches and roughness on both sides.

The reverse has a deep gouge-like depression touching above the right fleur de lys. The depression is quite smooth and dark in color. It does not resemble a normal accident to a coin and appears too smooth. It is not an original metal defect in the planchet as it has raised sections on its left outline.

The color in the fields on both sides is a uniform dark silver gray without any changes in color. This is unusual.

There is filing on the dentils above XIIII obliterating some of the detail of the dentils. The lower part of the T in ET is missing whereas the other two T strikings on the coin are clear.



Yet the adjacent E is also weak in its slower arm possibly due either to a lack of sufficient pressure ~~and~~ <sup>or</sup> much outward radial metal movement during striking.

The edge has no unusual qualities which seem indicative of anything.

There is contact wear on some high spots on this coin, probably not from circulation, but numismatic handling.

This is a very difficult piece to pass on without specialized tests for casting which may or may not be possible. It is our feeling that one should only condemn a piece if there is a reasonable basis to do so. The fineness of the silver and the adulterating metal percentages are probably correct if this piece is a cast, but this can be checked by a comparison of the content with a clearly genuine piece and the legally specified content requirement.

If others have pointed out features which are not covered in this letter we would like to know them. We believe the piece is rare enough to have specific non-destructive tests made. We will try to examine other pieces. We would like you to contact ANAAB for their observations and to send us a copy of them.

We are sorry to give equivocal comments but this piece has apparently been examined by many without clear diagnosis. We need more facts and they are available. We have reason to be concerned about the submitted piece as you can conclude from our comments.

We return the piece herewith.

Sincerely,

Eric P. Newman